

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1, 8, 12, 20, 27, 31, 34, 36 and 38 have been amended. Claims 7, 9, 10 and 24 have been canceled and claims 40 and 41 have been added.

A check in the amount of \$100.00 for added independent claim 40 is enclosed. Authorization is granted to charge our deposit account no. 03-3415 for any additional fees necessary for entry of this Amendment.

The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 1-3, 19-22, 30-33 and 35-37 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by the Gingrich, et al. (US 6,074,459) patent. The Examiner has also rejected applicants' claims 1-3, 11-14, 19-22, 25, 26, 30-33 and 35-37 under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by the Chow, et al. (US 2003/0113598) patent application publication. The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 4-9, 23, 24, 27, 28, 34, 38 and 39 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Chow, et al. publication in view of the Hanamoto, et al. (US 5,948,398) patent.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 10, 15-18 and 29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have amended claims 1, 20, 31 and 36 to include the features of allowed dependent claim 10, so as to recite "said second adsorbent bed comprising a sodium form zeolite." Applicants' amended independent claims 1, 20, 31 and 36, and their respective dependent claims, are therefore, believed allowable and to overcome the Examiner's above rejections. Applicants' dependent claims 7, 9, 10 and 24, which recite the features now included in the independent claims, have been cancelled.

Applicants have added claims 40 and 41 which correspond in scope to original claims 15 and 29. In particular, claim 40 represents original dependent claim 15 rewritten

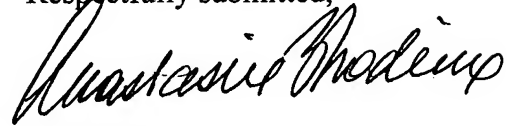
in independent form and claim 41 represents original dependent claim 29. The Examiner has indicated that applicants' claims 15 and 29 are allowable. New claims 40 and 41 are therefore also allowable.

In view of the above, all claims in the application, as amended, are allowable. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims and passage of same to issue is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Anastasia Zhadina".

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An Attorney of Record